



# 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

## Morgantown Planning Commission

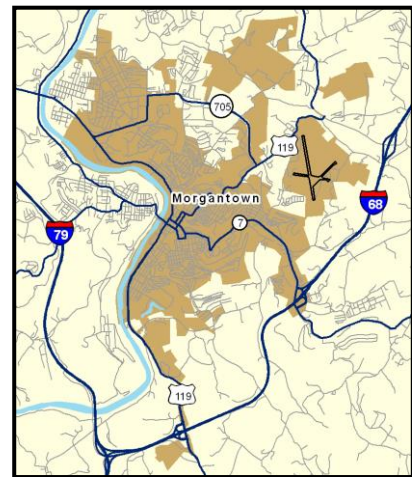
The West Virginia State Code Chapter 8A-2-11 requires Planning Commissions to:

“Make an annual report to the appropriate governing body concerning the operation of the planning commission and the status of planning within its jurisdiction.”

The Morgantown Planning Commission respectfully submits herewith its 2014 Annual Report. The Planning Commission also extends its sincere appreciation to City Council, City Administration, and the Morgantown community for the cooperative commitment toward the principles of enhancing the quality of life and the design of our city; fostering innovative planning; promoting distinctive neighborhoods and a healthy downtown; supporting sustainable community and economic development; and, involving citizens in the decisions that affect them.

### Morgantown Land Use Planning Milestones

1944.....City Council adopted first Zoning Ordinance  
 1959.....West Virginia Planning Enabling Act Adopted  
 1961.....City's First Comprehensive Plan Adopted  
 1970.....Comprehensive Plan Updated  
 1979 .....First City Planner Hired  
 1999.....Comprehensive Plan Update Adopted  
 2006.....Planning & Zoning Code Modernized and Codified  
 2010.....Downtown Strategic Plan Update Adopted  
 2013.....Comprehensive Plan Update Adopted



### 2014 Planning & Zoning Cases

The following table illustrates the caseload for the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals during the 2012, 2013, and 2014 calendar years.

PC	BZA	Number of Applications			2014 Actions			
		2012	2013	2014	Pending	Approved	Denied	W/drawn
Site Plans (DSI / MDSI)		5	2	4	0	3	1	0
Minor Subdivisions		22	24	11	0	10	0	1
Major Subdivisions		1	0	1	0	1	0	0
Map Amendments		5	4	7	0	3	2	2
Text Amendments		3	4	3	0	3	0	0
Variances		40	70	56	0	46	3	7
Conditional Uses		21	22	13	0	10	1	2
Administrative Appeals		2	1	3	0	1	1	1
TOTAL		99	127	98	0	77	8	13

## Citizen Planners

The success of local planning policies, programming, and services depends largely on the commitment and integrity of residents appointed by the Morgantown City Council to serve on various planning-related commissions, boards, and committees. Morgantown is fortunate to enjoy a well-informed public that is willing to serve the role of "Citizen Planner." The following table identifies these volunteers and their respective terms as of December 31, 2014.

Citizen Planner	Date of Original Appointment	Current Term	Tenure (in months)
<b>Planning Commission</b>			
Peter DeMasters, President 6 <sup>th</sup> Ward Representative	03/21/06	01/01/14 – 12/31/16	106.5
Carol Pyles, Vice-President 7 <sup>th</sup> Ward Representative	09/17/08	01/01/13 – 12/31/15	77.5
Sam Loretta 1 <sup>st</sup> Ward Representative	06/20/06	01/01/12 – 12/31/14	103.5
Tim Stranko 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ward Representative	03/21/07	01/01/12 – 12/31/14	94.5
William Blosser 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ward Representative	11/05/2013	01/01/14 – 12/31/16	15
William Petros 4 <sup>th</sup> Ward Representative	01/19/10	01/01/13 – 12/31/15	60.5
Michael Shuman 5 <sup>th</sup> Ward Representative	08/04/09	01/01/13 – 12/31/15	66
William Kaweck City Councilor	07/02/13	City Council term ending 06/30/15	19
Dr. Ken Martis Administration Representative	05/01/01	at will of City Manager	165.5
<i>PC Tenure Summary:</i> Total: 708 mos. or 59 yrs.      Average: 78.5 mos. or 6.5 yrs.			
<b>Board of Zoning Appeals</b>			
Bernie Bossio, Chair	01/04/05	01/01/12 – 12/31/14	121.5
Leanne Cardoso, Vice-Chair	08/21/07	01/01/13 – 12/31/15	89.5
George Papandreas	02/06/08	01/01/12 – 12/31/14	84
William Burton	12/17/2013	01/01/14 – 12/31/16	14
James Shaffer	02/07/06	01/01/13 – 12/31/15	84
<i>BZA Tenure Summary:</i> Total: 393 mos. or 32.75 yrs.      Average: 78.6 mos. or 6.5 yrs.			

The tenure trends illustrated in the table above for the Morgantown's Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals demonstrates a high level of stability, understanding, commitment, capacity, and leadership among these volunteer committees that Morgantown is very fortunate to enjoy.

The following table identifies attendance trends for the 2012, 2013, and 2014 calendar years. Please note that seven (7) Planning Commission hearings were canceled during this period due to the lack of business matters.

Citizen Planner	2012		2013		2014		Three-Year Attendance Rate
	Absent	Present	Absent	Present	Absent	Present	
<b>Planning Commission</b>							
Peter DeMasters 6 <sup>th</sup> Ward Representative	0	10	2	8	2	7	86%
Carol Pyles 7 <sup>th</sup> Ward Representative	3	7	2	8	0	9	83%
Sam Loretta 1 <sup>st</sup> Ward Representative	2	8	2	8	2	7	80%
Tim Stranko 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ward Representative	3	7	2	8	2	7	73%
William Blosser 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ward Representative	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	8	87.5%
William Petros 4 <sup>th</sup> Ward Representative	4	6	0	10	1	8	83%
Michael Shuman 5 <sup>th</sup> Ward Representative	2	8	3	7	1	8	80%
William Kawecki City Councilor	N/A	N/A	1	4	1	8	86%
Dr. Ken Martis Administration Representative	3	7	1	9	2	7	83%
<b>Board of Zoning Appeals</b>							
Bernie Bossio	2	10	2	10	2	10	85%
Leanne Cardoso	1	11	2	10	1	11	89%
George Papandreas	2	10	1	11	1	11	89%
James Shaffer	4	8	2	10	3	9	75%
Bill Burton	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	10	83%

## 2014 Building Permits and Construction Value

During the 2014 calendar year, the City issued 1,331 building permits. The total construction/improvement value in dollars for which building permits were issued was \$22,360,704.14. The total amount of building permit related fees paid to the City was \$136,206.64.

## Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)

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As of January 1, 2015, there have been six (6) Planned Unit Development (PUD) Outline Plans recommended by the Planning Commission and approved by City Council. The following narrative provides a brief update on the history and status for each PUD.

- **Square at Falling Run** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in 2003. Phase I to construct “The Augusta” was completed and tenants occupied the buildings in September 2007. The Planning Division reports that the developer has since filed bankruptcy and most if not all of the related realty has been acquired by West Virginia University. The 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update recommends that a new zoning district be development to include most if not all of the University’s realty, which is programmed for 2015.
- **SC Bodner** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in 2006 and an amendment approved in 2008. The construction of “Mountaineer Place Apartments” has been completed and occupancy permits issued Fall 2010. The only remaining element is a gateway enhancement project within the Stewart Street and University Avenue right-of-way, which will satisfy the PUD’s open space requirement. The Planning Division reports that Construction Business and Occupation Tax revenues generated by the development were earmarked by the Office of City Manager for this project along with a financial commitment made by “Sunnyside Up”. Project design and construction should be completed in 2015.
- **Grand Central Apartments** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in 2007 and an amendment approved in December 2008. The amendment approval included, among others, a condition that the PUD Development Plan be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission within 18 months following City Council approval of the Outline Plan. The PUD Development Plan was not submitted and City Council, with the recommendation of the Planning Commission, consequentially enacted Ordinance 10-34 in September 2010 rescinding the PUD designation and reclassifying the subject realty to its previous zoning. It should be noted that the subject site and surrounding area is identified in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update Appendix A as a future study area.
- **Westminster House** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in December 2008 and amendments approved November 2009, February 2011, October 2011, and December 2011 extending the deadline to submit the PUD Development Plan. City Council, with the recommendation of the Planning Commission and consent of the developer, enacted Ordinance 12-48 in November 2012 rescinding the PUD designation and reclassifying the subject realty to its previous zoning. The zoning for the subject site was again reclassified to B-4, General Business District by Ordinance 13-47 in September 2013. Construction is currently underway of a six-story, 120 multi-family dwelling unit (234 occupants) development with delivery project for Fall 2015.
- **Habitat for Humanity** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in July 2009 and an amendment was approved February 2011 to extend the deadline to submit the PUD Development Plan. City Council, with the recommendation of the Planning Commission and consent of the developer, enacted Ordinance 12-03 in January 2012 rescinding the PUD designation and reclassifying the subject realty to its previous zoning. Habitat for Humanity is currently constructing single-family structures on the subject site.
- **Beech View Place** – PUD Outline Plan was approved in March 2010. Construction has been completed with full residential occupancy and the majority of the retail spaces occupied.

## 2015 Priorities & Planned Activities

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- **Comprehensive Plan Implementation** – City Staff is developing a web-based portal to publish plan implementation progress on the internet for the over 200 implementation strategies identified in the plan. This web-based interface will be launched in first or second calendar quarter of 2015. Additionally, City Council allocated \$70,000.00 in the 2015 Fiscal Year Capital Escrow to outsource tasks relating to prioritized strategy implementation.
- **2010 Downtown Strategic Plan Implementation** – City Council allocated \$50,000.00 in the 2015 Fiscal Year Capital Escrow for Downtown Plan implementation. The City Manager's Office has directed \$10,000 for City initiated and \$40,000 for Main Street Morgantown initiated implementation task completion. The Planning Division, with the assistance of outsourced consulting services, will prepare design criteria that will be formally incorporated into the Planning and Zoning Code in order to promote better quality development in the downtown. The design criteria, through the combination of text and graphics, focus on factors such as building form, height, density, scale, materials, relationships to the street and sidewalks, and others. Project initiation is planned for the first calendar quarter of 2015 with completion in 9 to 12 months.
- **Citizen Planner Training** – Strategy I 2.4 of the Comprehensive Plan provides for the development of a formal training program for members of the Planning Commission and BZA focusing on land use law, meeting procedures, organization dynamics and how to use the Plan. Training opportunities have been conducted in the past by Staff and through WVU's College of Law Land Use and Sustainable Development Law Clinic. The Planning Division will develop more formalized and reoccurring programming for citizen planner training beginning 2015.
- **Modernization of Planning and Zoning Code Fee Schedule** – Fees associated with Planning and Zoning Code related applications and petitions have remained the same for a number of years. During the period of 01 JUL 2011 to 30 JUN 2014, Planning and Zoning Code related fees covered on 4.6% of service delivery costs. Staff will be working to develop fee schedule revisions in 2015 that better reflect the extent of services that are not currently recovered by existing fees.
- **Modernization of Subdivision Regulations** – The Planning Commission and City Council completed the lengthy task of modernizing and codifying the City's zoning regulations in 2006. The fundamental purpose of this endeavor was to implement progressive land use policies and strategies as well as comply with the State Legislature's similar effort in 2004 to modernize the State's Planning Enabling Law. Changes in State Code have created opportunities to streamline the review and approval of subdivision petitions. Incorporating these opportunities in Morgantown's Planning and Zoning Code requires a major amendment to the City's subdivision regulations. This project remains a priority and requires General Fund support to outsource the project. The Planning Division will continue to request project funding.
- **Sign Regulations** – Sign regulation management and enforcement remains a significant challenge given the scale and scope of related variances approved since 2006 and Planning Division staffing levels. Funding is necessary to outsource a comprehensive revision to the existing sign regulations thereby reducing the number of variances sought and incorporating greater sign design and development flexibility. The Planning Division will continue to request project funding.
- **Staffing Levels** – The City Manager's Office recently directed all City Departments to internally prepare a preliminary task to man hour analysis of essential services to measure how many full-time employees are required to perform completed tasks. The Planning Division's report identified a full-time equivalent (FTE) of 2.7 for essential services that are currently completed and 7.5 for essential and mission-related services. Current staffing levels remain at 2.0. The Planning Division will continue to request resources to balance staffing levels and service delivery obligations.